This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

200657Z Mar 02

CONFIDENTIAL PTO2322

HARARE 00725 200711Z PAGE 01 ACTION AF-00 AID-00 INFO LOG-00 NP-00AMAD-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 SRPP-00 EB-00 EUR-00 VC-00 DS-00 H - 0.1TEDE-00 INR-00 AC-01 NSAE-00 IO-00 LAB-01 L-00 VCE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 OPIC-01 PA-00 PC-01 PM - 00PRS-00 ACE-00 P-00 SP-00 STR-00 TRSE-00 USIE-00 PMB-00 DSCC-00 PRM-00 DRL-02 G-00 NFAT-00 SAS-00 SWCI-00 /010W ----77CA69 200711Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1272
INFO NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000725

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY PARIS FOR CHARLES NEARY NAIROBI FOR TERRY PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/20/12
TAGS: PGOV PHUM ZI
SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE: REPRESSIVE MEDIA LEGISLATION GOES
INTO EFFECT

REF: HARARE 345

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER TODD FAULK FOR REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND (D).

- 11. (U) ON MARCH 15, PRESIDENT MUGABE SIGNED AND GAZETTED INTO LAW THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT, WHICH THE PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE PASSED ON JANUARY 31 (REFTEL), AND WHICH PLACES SEVERE RESTRICTIONS ON THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA. THE GAZETTING OF THE ACT BRINGS IT INTO IMMEDIATE EFFECT.
- 12. (C) COMMENT: PRESIDENT MUGABE PROBABLY WAITED UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTION TO SIGN THE ACT BECAUSE HE DID NOT WANT TO GIVE HIS INTERNATIONAL DETRACTORS MORE AMMUNITION FOR TOUGH ACTION DURING HIS CAMPAIGN. HE ALSO KNEW THAT KEY PROVISIONS OF THE ACT WOULD NOT GO INTO EFFECT UNTIL AFTER THE ACT WAS GAZETTED. ONE OF THEM IS THE REQUIREMENT THAT MASS MEDIA OUTLETS REGISTER WITH THE YET-TO-BE-ESTABLISHED MEDIA AND INFORMATION COMMISSION WITHIN THREE MONTHS OF THE GAZETTING OF THE ACT (WHICH NOW MAKES THE DEADLINE JUNE 15). MUGABE'S DECISION TO BRING THE ACT INTO EFFECT ONLY TWO DAYS AFTER HE WAS DECLARED THE WINNER OF THE ELECTION DEMONSTRATES HIS DETERMINATION TO CONTINUE SUPPRESSING HIS CRITICS IN ZIMBABWE. END COMMENT.

SULLIVAN

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